CBI Inquiry in the case of Ex-Chief Secretary of NCTD

†1168. PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV:
SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) on what basis the CBI interrogated Jal Singh relative of Virender Singh, former Chief Secretary, Delhi Government;

(b) the information relevant to the case derived by CBI from the above inquiry;

(c) whether Jal Singh had died under torture inflicted by CBI; if not, whether Government would conduct any investigation into it and take action against the officers found guilty; and

(d) if so, by when; and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) Shri Jal Singh was examined by the CBI on the basis of source information and facts collected during investigation in the criminal case registered against Shri Virender Singh, former principal Secretary, Training and Technical Education, Government of NCT of Delhi.

(b) Shri Jal Singh in the course of his examination disclosed the details of a number of Benami properties allegedly owned by the said Shri Virender Singh.

(c) and (d) Shri Jal Singh was called to the CBI office during the period from 12.05.2000 to 14.05.2000 for the lawful purpose of interrogation and was examined strictly in accordance with law. He was an important witness in the case and had also fully cooperated in the investigation of the case registered against Shri Virender Singh.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

There was, therefore, no question of causing any harassment to him. The inquiry made into the matter by Delhi police also indicates that there is *prima facie* no substance in the allegation that Shri Jal Singh committed suicide on 21.05.2000 because he was harassed by the CBI.

Proposal to Amend Art. 355

1169. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government are considering actively an amendment to Art. 355 of the Constitution;

(b) if so, details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) whether viewpoints of the major political parties in the country and various State Governments would be elicited before going in for the amendment if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) Article 355 is a precursor of Article 356. Both these Articles have been a subject matter of discussion in the meetings of the Standing Committee and Inter State Council. In the Sixth meeting of the Standing Committee held on December 19, 1998, the subject was remitted to a Sub-Committee consisting of Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Finance Minister of West Bengal under the convenorship of Union Defence Minister. The matter was also discussed in the Fifth meeting of the Inter State council held on 22nd January, 1999, in which it was decided that the Sub-Committee under the convenorship of the Union Defence Minister should continue deliberations to evolve a consensus.

In the sixth meeting of the Inter State Council held on 20.05.2000, the sub-Committee set up as above has been reconstituted by the Prime Minister and comprises of Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Finance Minister of West Bengal under the convenorship of Union Defence Minister.

The matter is to be considered further by the Sub-Committee and thereafter by the Standing Committee/Inter State Council.